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STURMINSTER RURAL DISTRICT.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health
for the Year 1942

This Report is prepared on the lines asked for by the Minister of Health in Circular 2773. In accordance with his directions most information usually contained in the Report is omitted and filed for future reference.

Noel F. Pearson M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H. Medical Officer of Health since January 1940 was called up for service in the Army on the 31st October, 1942. Gilbert Bodley Scott, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. was appointed Temporary Medical Officer of Health as from 2nd November, 1942.

Infectious Disease

There are no outstanding facts regarding the incidence of infectious disease in the district during the year which call for comment. Those cases requiring hospitalisation were admitted to Vine House Isolation Hospital, Sturminster Newton, administered by the North Dorset Joint Hospital Board (of which your Authority is a constituent member). No cases of Diphtheria were notified during the year.

Diphtheria Immunisation

During the year Immunisation against Diphtheria has been carried out in accordance with the Council's Scheme which makes immunisation free of cost available to all children between the ages of one and fifteen years. A monthly session was held throughout the year at the First Aid Point, Sturminster Newton to which all applicants in the District were invited. In addition, treatment sessions were held in villages where the number of applications justified such an arrangement being made. In spite of this, however, there still remained a certain number in the more outlying parts of the district unable to receive treatment on account of transport difficulties, and at the end of the year the matter was receiving consideration with a view to improving this position.

At the 31st December 79% of children of school age had received treatment, and 39% of children under school age.

Scabies

This is not a statutory notifiable disease and therefore it is difficult to estimate the prevalence of the condition in the area. The number of cases admitted to the Sick Bay during the year, however, gives some indication of the incidence of the disease. From the North Dorset District 113 cases of Scabies were admitted during 1942, 61 of these being from the Sturminster Rural District. More cases than this no doubt occurred, but school returns showed a considerable reduction in the incidence, especially towards the latter part of the year when a rise in the number of cases had been anticipated.

Evacuation

Good use continued to be made of the Sick Bay and various Hostels in the district. Towards the end of the year Dr. F.H.Dodd was appointed for the psychiatric treatment of evacuee children in residence at the Hostels.

In addition to the short-stay Nursery at "The Firs"

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Shillingstone, a Residential Nursery was established in April at "Hingarston" Marnhull, providing accommodation for twenty-eight children under five years of age. A Day Nursery was also established at the Methodist Schoolroom, Marnhull, but the number of children attending did not justify its continuance.

Ready reciprocal use by all the Authorities in North Dorset of the various Hostels and Nurseries within the several districts has again been achieved by the ready goodwill and mutual assistance of the Chief Billeting Officers.

In conclusion, I would like to express my appreciation of the courtesy and help afforded to me by your Council and Officers.

G. B. SCOTT,

Temporary Medical Officer
of Health.

18th June, 1943.